

are but a form of drama. Symbols and emblems have the same character. The old religions were subjected to criticism, which means that they had lost their authority. They did not verify when the attempt was made to use them for societal needs. Slaves, merchants, soldiers, etc., afloat in the world, associated from choice and contributed traditions from the whole known world. Then syncretism began, and a body of sectarian notions was formed. There was a new totemism, a breaking down of national religion, a spirit of propaganda, and a setting forth of the whole in all dramatic forms.¹ In the sects women were admitted, a fact of double significance. It was an emancipation for the women and a peril for the sect. The doubt with which the mysteries are now regarded is due to the uncertainty as to the relations of the sexes in them. The word "orgy" originally meant worship, or rites, then secret rites, that is, mysteries. The sense in which the word has come down to us shows the notion about secret meetings which became commonly accepted.

The customs which had grown out of religious interest had reached the desire for entertainment and pleasure. They satisfied it and stimulated it, and the religious element might be forgotten.

623. Beginnings of the theater at Rome. The Floralia were instituted at Rome in 240 B.C. They were celebrated by courtesans with processions, lascivious pantomimes, etc. They are said to have come from Greece.² In the same year Livius Andronicus presented at Rome the first play translated from the Greek. In 154 the first permanent theater was established there against great opposition. In 146 the first theater outside the circus,

with seats, was provided.³ All mimic actions were foreign to the austere mores of the early Romans, but in the second century B.C. the mores changed through the growth of wealth and contact with other nations. Young Romans learned from actors to sing and dance, acts which their ancestors thought unworthy of free persons* The earliest plays were called *saturae*, because they were

¹ W. R. Smith, *Relig. of the Semites*, 357-359.

² Wissowa, *Rdig. of the Romans*, 163.

³ Magnin, *Origines du Theatre Moderns*, 324, 463.